

Message Text

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ORIGIN EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CCO-00 CIAE-00 OTPE-00 FCC-01

INR-07 NSAE-00 OC-06 USIA-06 COME-00 BIB-01 ACDA-07

DODE-00 PM-04 L-03 NASA-01 NSC-05 ERDA-05 OES-06 IO-13

CU-02 DOTE-00 FMC-01 SAL-01 CG-00 DLOS-06 AF-08 NEA-10

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EUR/RPE - MR. SWARTZ

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PARIS

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETEL, FR, TSPA

SUBJECT: MARISAT AND INDIAN OCEAN.

MARISAT, WHICH IS A CONSORTIUM OF COMSAT GENERAL AND
THREE U.S. RECORD CARRIERS, IS COMMERCIAL ORGANIZATION
FOR PURPOSE OF MARITIME COMMUNICATIONS SATELLITE SERVICE.

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SATELLITES FOR INITIAL PERIOD WILL BE USED PRIMARILY FOR

SERVICE TO USN BUT THERE IS EXCESS CAPACITY AVAILABLE TO MERCHANT SHIPPING. MARISAT HAS RECENTLY LAUNCHED TWO SATELLITES, ONE FOR THE ATLANTIC AND ONE FOR THE PACIFIC OCEAN.

DEPARTMENT HAS JUST BEEN INFORMED BY COMSAT GENERAL THAT IN RESPONSE TO REQUEST FROM USN THE CONSORTIUM IS PRESENTLY NEGOTIATING TO PLACE A THIRD SATELLITE OVER INDIAN OCEAN. ONE ASPECT OF THIS PROPOSAL IF CONTRACT IS SIGNED IS IMPACT ON DISCUSSIONS AND NEGOTIATIONS OVER PAST YEAR BETWEEN MARISAT AND EUROPEAN SPACE AGENCY (ESA) REGARDING COMPATIBILITY OF MARISAT WITH ESA'S PLANNED MAROTS (EXPERIMENTAL SATELLITE) SCHEDULED FOR LAUNCH IN LATE 1977 OR 78. ESA'S ORIGINAL PLAN WAS TO POSITION MAROTS SATELLITE OVER WEST AFRICA TO GIVE COVERAGE IN ATLANTIC OCEAN. AFTER SEVERAL DISCUSSIONS WITH MARISAT, AND IN INTEREST OF A JOINT EFFORT OFFERING GLOBAL COVERAGE, ESA

AGREED TO MOVE ITS SATELLITE OVER EAST AFRICA FOR INDIAN OCEAN COVERAGE.

FOR LAST SEVERAL MONTHS THERE HAVE BEEN SOMEWHAT FALTERING TALKS BETWEEN MARISAT PARTNERS AND EUROPEAN REPRESENTATIVES. LATTER HAVE BEEN COMPRISED OF BOTH ESA AND CEPT REPRESENTING EUROPEAN TELECOMMUNICATION OPERATING ADMINISTRATIONS' INTERESTS. PURPOSE OF LATTER'S INVOLVEMENT WAS TO EXAMINE HOW ESA EXPERIMENTAL SATELLITE COULD BE TURNED OVER TO CEPT AS AN OPERATIONAL SATELLITE. COMSAT GENERAL TELLS DEPARTMENT THAT CONSULTATIONS WITH EUROPEANS HAVE NOT BEEN PROMISING IN RECENT MONTHS.

JOHN JOHNSON, PRESIDENT OF COMSAT GENERAL, HAS TRIED TO SPEAK BY PHONE TO ROY GIBSON, ESA SECRETARY GENERAL, TO INFORM HIM OF MARISAT'S TENTATIVE PLANS FOR INDIAN OCEAN SATELLITE, BUT HAS BEEN UNSUCCESSFUL DUE TO GIBSON'S ABSENCE FROM PARIS. NOW JOHNSON PLANS TO TRAVEL TO EUROPE THIS WEEKEND BUT WILL NOT SEE GIBSON UNTIL AFTERNOON OF JULY 29. BECAUSE LATEST MARISAT DEVELOPMENT COULD HAVE SERIOUS CONSEQUENCE IN TERMS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF HOPED-FOR COOPERATIVE MARISAT/MAROTS "MARRIAGE", DEPARTMENT IS INTERESTED IN ANY INFORMATION EMBASSY PARIS IS ABLE TO OBTAIN ON ESA REACTION TO JOHNSON VISIT. EMBASSY SHOULD NOT RAISE SUBJECT WITH ESA UNTIL IT IS CERTAIN THAT JOHNSON HAS SPOKEN TO GIBSON. HOWEVER BECAUSE MARISAT'S PLANS WILL PROBABLY BECOME KNOWN AT INTELSAT BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEETING STARTING JULY 21, IT IS POSSIBLE THAT SUBJECT WILL SURFACE IN EMBASSY

CONTACTS WITH ESA BEFORE JOHNSON MEETING.

ALTHOUGH NO ACTION IS REQUIRED OF INFO ADDRESSEES,
DEPARTMENT WOULD APPRECIATE REPORT OF ANY REACTIONS TO
MARISAT CONSORTIUM'S PLANS FOR COMMERCIAL SERVICE IN
INDIAN OCEAN BASIN. KISSINGER

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